IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a tool component including the steps of: (1) providing a plurality of fibres, each fibre having a core comprising a mass of ultra-hard abrasive particles or precursor to said ultra-hard abrasive particles and optionally a second phase, and a coating comprising a mixture of carbide particles and particulate binder metal, (2) producing a bundle of the fibres, (3) severing the bundle transverse to its length to produce a layer, (4) placing the layer on a surface of a substrate to produce a green state product, and (5) subjecting the layer and substrate to elevated temperature and pressure conditions at which the ultra-hard abrasive particles are crystallographically stable to produce an abrasive compact of the ultra-hard abrasive particles.

2. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the bundle of fibres is extruded prior to being severed to produce the layer.

3. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the core further comprises an organic binder and wherein the core comprises a mixture of diamond or cubic boron nitride particles and an appropriate solvent/catalyst, in particulate form, bonded into a coherent mass form by means of an organic binder.

4. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the coating ~~is bonded~~ further comprises an organic binder which bonds the mixture of carbide particles and particulate metal binder into a coherent form ~~by means of an organic binder~~.

5. (Previously Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the carbide particles are tungsten carbide particles, tantalum carbide particles or molybdenum carbide particles.

6. (Previously Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the substrate is a cemented carbide substrate.

7. (Previously Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the coating comprises one or more layers.

8. (Original) A method according to claim 7, wherein the coating comprises more than one layer, each layer differing from an adjacent layer in physical and/or chemical properties.

9. (Original) A method according to claim 8, wherein one layer has coarser or finer carbide particles than the adjacent layer (s) or contains a different metal binder to that in the adjacent layer (s).

10. (Previously Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the tool component comprising the substrate has a working portion produced from the layer bonded to a surface thereof.

11. (Original) A method according to claim 10, wherein the working portion comprises a composite material comprising essentially a honeycomb structure of cemented carbide and abrasive compact material within the pores of the honeycomb structure and bonded to the honeycomb structure.

12. (Original) A method according to claim 11, wherein the pores of the honeycomb structure are ordered or random.

13. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a tool component including the steps of: (1) providing a plurality of fibres, each fibre having a core comprising a mixture of carbide particles and particulate binder metal, and a coating comprising a mass of ultra-hard abrasive particles or precursor to said ultra-hard abrasive particles and optionally a second phase, (2) producing a bundle of the fibres, (3) severing the bundle transverse to its length to product a layer, (4) placing the layer on a surface of a substrate to produce a green state product, and (5) subjecting the layer and substrate to elevated temperature and pressure conditions at which the ultra-hard abrasive particles are crystallographically stable to produce an abrasive compact of the ultra-hard abrasive particles.